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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [KU](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: WRITING ON WALL FOR TARASOV MANDATE

REF: A. KUWAIT 779
[1](#)B. KUWAIT 566
[1](#)C. KUWAIT 514
[1](#)D. KUWAIT 190

Classified By: Political Counselor Pete O'Donohue for reasons 1.4 b and d

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) Ambassador Gennady Tarasov, UN High-Level Coordinator for the repatriation of Kuwait's missing persons and archives, expressed to Ambassador on October 5 his concern that an end to his mandate in June 2010 would be perceived by Kuwait as a mass surrender by UN officials to political expedience. He staked his future as High-Level Coordinator as resting on the outcome of the October 6 ICRC-led Technical Subcommittee (TSC) meeting; he hoped that the Iraqi delegation -- building on momentum of previous TSCs -- will provide solid leads that would result in the recovery of Kuwaiti mortal remains in Iraq and in so doing, keep alive the UN-brokered search for the archives. He is drafting a "transitional" paper on progress to date and on the prospects for progress over the next eight months until his commission is up for review. His outlook for the report is bleak; there has been little progress over the past summer and the upcoming January elections in Iraq will further distract -- and possibly temporarily derail -- further cooperation on this front between Iraq and Kuwaiti. End summary.

Tarasov Mission Winding Down...

[1](#)2. (C) While he had little progress to report, Tarasov asserted that it would send the wrong signal to the Iraqis and Kuwaitis (and the rest of the world) if the UN were simply to throw up its hands when his mandate concludes 8 months from now, in June 2010; ending his mandate would amount to an admission of defeat. (Note: In discussing his mandate, it appears Tarasov was referring to the UNSYG's recommendation that his term extend until June 2010, not the Council's approval of funding until December 2009. End Note.) He believed the Kuwaitis would mobilize -- as they had successfully on Chapter VII and UNSCR 833 -- if they sensed any move toward allowing Tarasov's "humanitarian mission" to expire. Tarasov also voiced his skepticism that absent UN pressure, Iraq, given its "proclivity" to believing it has complied with all Kuwaiti-relevant UNSC resolutions, would take serious steps to search for the archives. Looking ahead, he suggested that the UNSYG should convoke Iraqi and Kuwaiti delegations to discuss how Iraq can provide adequate assurances -- laying out realistic plans and timelines -- that it would continue the search.

...But the Search Must Go On.

13. (C) Barring unforeseen evidentiary breakthroughs on October 6 or in upcoming TSC meetings, Tarasov anticipates that his commission will end June 2010. Preparing for this outcome, Tarasov told Ambassador that in calls on senior Kuwaiti officials (including the PM, possibly the FM, and Amiri advisor Mohammed Abulhassan), and other Tripartite delegation members, he will urge for "creative solutions" for continuing the search for the missing archives. Tarasov emphasized that he does not feel his work is done. Without acknowledging that the USG is also examining the utility of continuing Tarasov's mission, Ambassador suggested that following so many years of stagnation, it might be worth considering alternate vehicles or approaches for moving the ball forward.

Venue for Convening of TC

14. (C) Tarasov commended the Iraqi delegation for offering to host the November 17-18 Chiefs of Mission TC in Baghdad (reported ref A), but expressed pessimism that the Iraqi MOHR would be able to follow through with its offer. Ambassador reiterated USG support for Iraqi hosting of the event, but asserted to Tarasov that more needs to be accomplished than the mere symbolic hosting of the event. She added that the scheduled January elections in Baghdad could preclude the Iraqi hosting of the following TSC, which would make March the next opportunity for an Iraqi-hosted TSC.

TSC Delegations Split

15. (C) We believe initial Kuwaiti enthusiasm for the Baghdad venue has attenuated as a function of informal consultations with the Saudis (the local ICRC head told DCM and poloff October 4 that the Saudis appear unenthusiastic, and while they have not responded formally, have elevated the decision on whether to support the proposed Baghdad venue to FM Prince Saud Al Faisal). GoK reluctance may also reflect Kuwait's concerns about security conditions in Baghdad, particularly around their mission at the Al Rasheed Hotel - and we understand per the ICRC that should the venue for the November TC be confirmed as Baghdad, the venue ICRC would likely propose would be the Al Rasheed. Per the ICRC (protect) the French missions in Kuwait and Iraq are also at odds over where the event should take place, with each ambassador urging their post be chosen, leading the decision to be decided by the Quai. In any case, the ICRC rep said that Baghdad did not appear likely to be the consensus venue for the November TC, adding that given the onset of the election season in Iraq it would perhaps be best to wait until after January to host the next scheduled event here.

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